Buffalo Computer Graphics (BCG)

Creating Social Media Boards within DisasterLAN

Ebola Outbreak Use Case

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DLAN

Contents

Introduction

This is the first in a series of documents aimed to illustrate the many ways the Status Board module in DisasterLAN (DLAN) can be used. Each document will go through a real world example and result in the creation of a Status Board that can be put to use by emergency managers.

This paper will provide step-by-step instructions on how to create social media status boards within DLAN. It uses the recent global Ebola outbreak as a model use case.

Section 1 will go over how to add Twitter subscriptions. For this example the Vox.com article titled "29 Twitter accounts you should follow to understand the Ebola outbreak[1]" will be used. When there is any major crisis or event, online media outlets such as Vox.com often publish compilations of Twitter accounts related to the topic. These article are a good way to find out who are the major news sources for a given topic.

The accounts in the Vox.com article are broken up into four categories: reports from West Africa, news and analysis, organizations fighting Ebola and American media sources. Four Twitter subscriptions will be created based on these categories.

Section 2 will go over how to use these subscriptions to create Status Board panels. Four panels will be created using each of the subscriptions from Section 1. The final Status Board can be used to monitor relevant and accredited social media accounts related to the Ebola outbreak.

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[1] http://www.vox.com/2014/8/7/5974963/ebola-outbreak-virus-twitter-accounts-list-follow-symptoms-who-news-facts

Section 1: Creating Twitter subscriptions within DisasterLAN

1.   Navigate to Admin -> Status Board -> Status Board Subscriptions.

Figure 1: Navigation

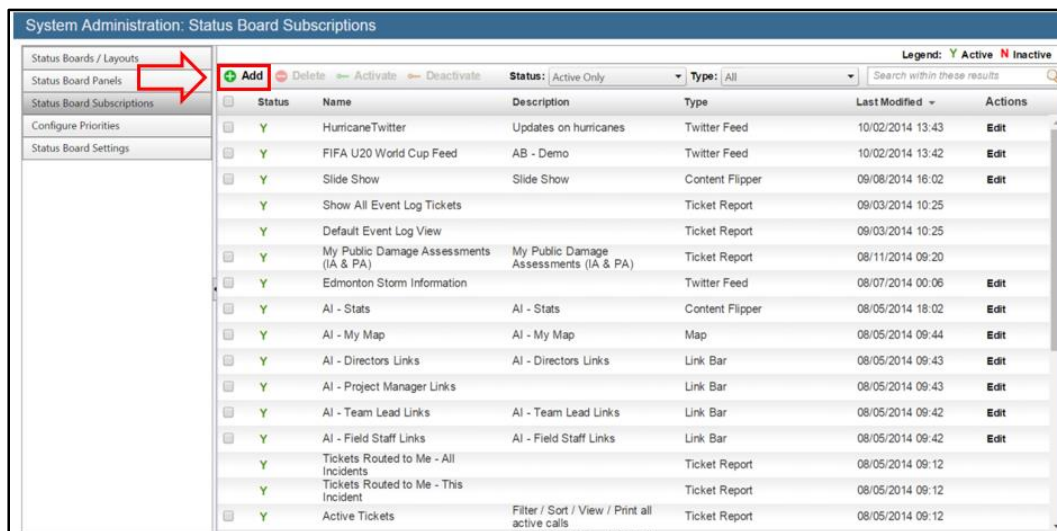2.   Click the Add button.

Figure 2: Add Subscription

3.   Fill out the Name and Description fields.

4.   For the Subscription Type field select the "Twitter Feed" option.

5.   For the Account field select the twitter user account you wish to be tied to this feed.

6.   Uncheck the "Is User-feed?:" checkbox.

Figure 3: Subscription Form

7.   In a new browser window open the list of twitter accounts compiled by vox.com.

Figure 4: Vox Article

8. Since the Vox article is broken up into 4 sections we will create 4 different subscriptions in DisasterLAN. Enter in the recommended twitter accounts for the "Reports from West Africa" section of the article into the "Followed Accounts:" field in DisasterLAN.

9. After all accounts under the section are added click the Save button to save the twitter subscription.

10. Repeat this process adding the "News and analysis" section as its own subscription, the "Organizations fighting Ebola" section as its own subscription and finally the "The American Angle" section as its own subscription.

Section 2: Creating Status Board within DisasterLAN that displays the Twitter feeds.

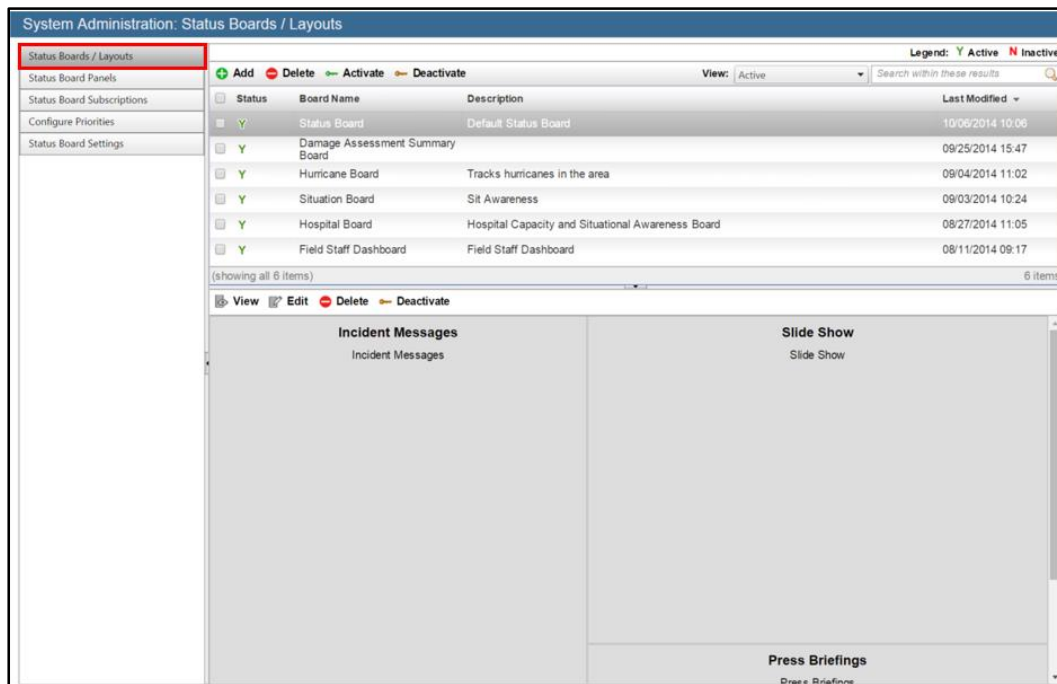1. Navigate to Admin -> Status Board -> Status Board Layouts.
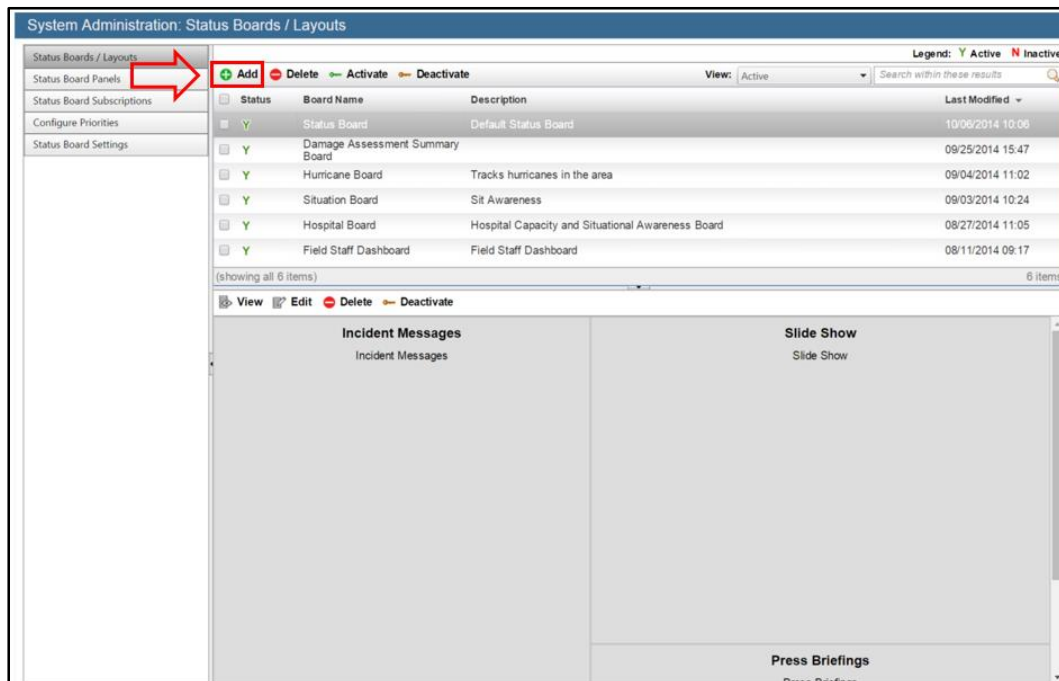

Figure 5: System Administration

2. Click Add.

Figure 6: Add Status Board/Layout

3. Enter an "Ebola Outbreak Tracker" as the board name. Enter a description.

4. For the "Target Layout:" fields select the Wide option.

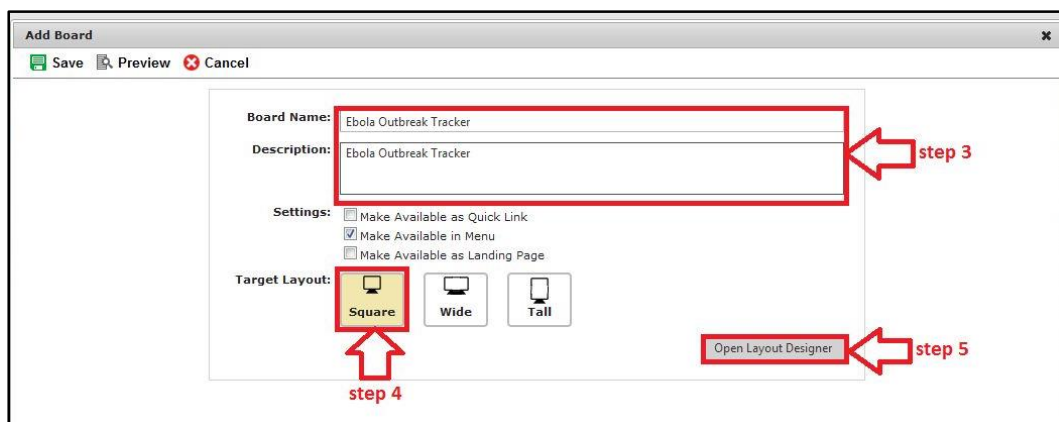5. Click the Open Layout Designer button.

Figure 7: Layout Designer
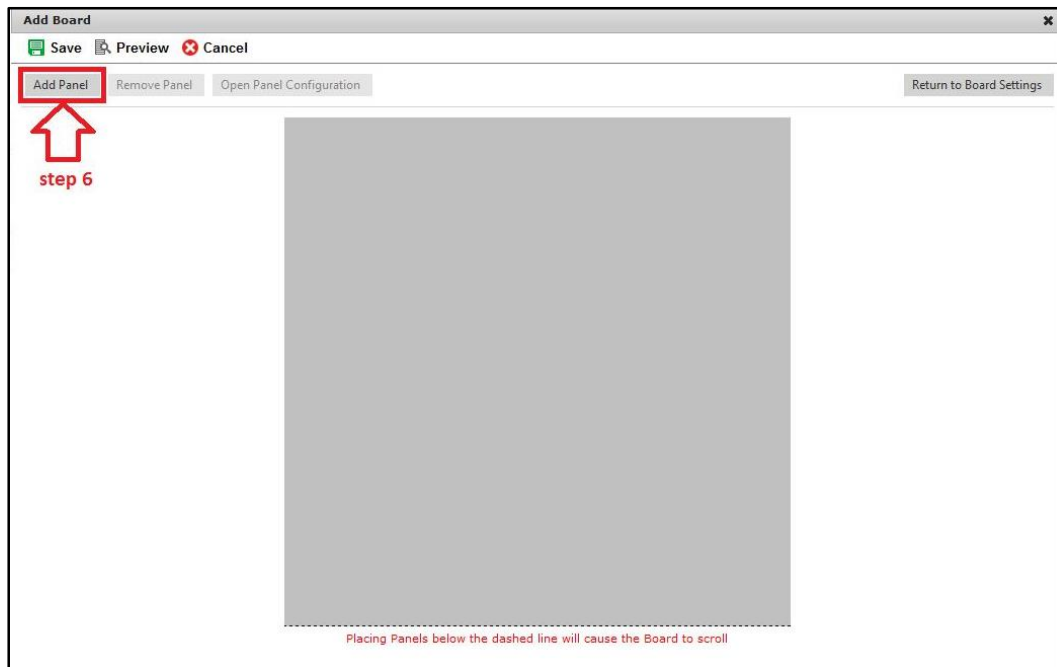
6.   Click the "Add Panel" button.

Figure 8: Add Panel

7.   Select the new panel by clicking on it. Once the panel is selected click the "Open Panel Configuration" button.
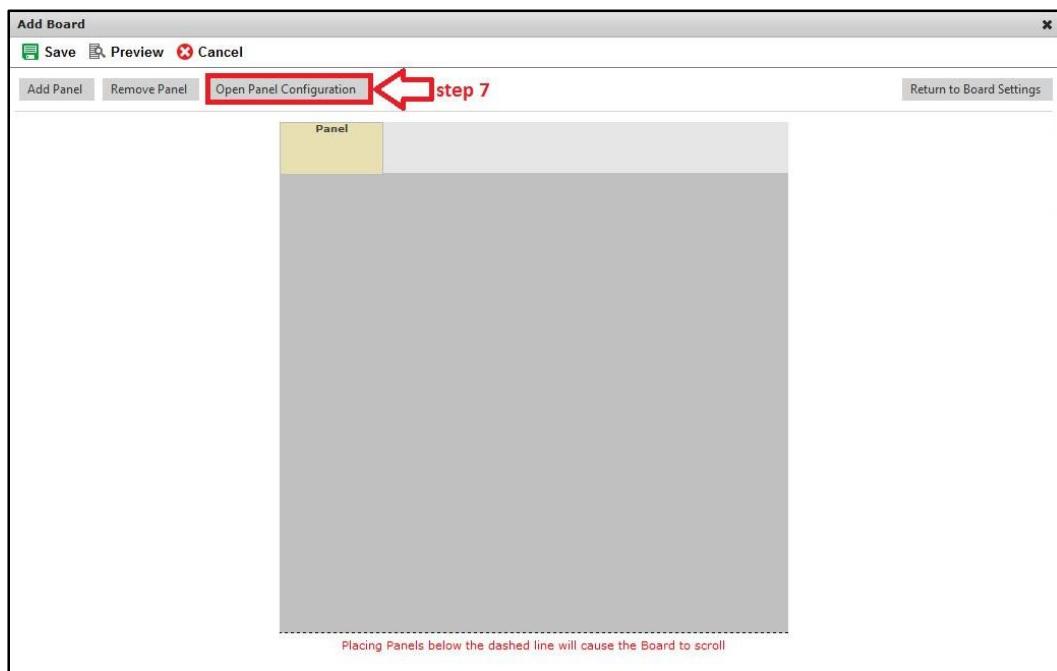

Figure 9: Open Panel Configuration

8. Enter a name and description for the panel. Select "Vertical Text Scroller" option for the Presentation Mode field.

Figure 10: New Panel Settings A

9. In the list of Subscriptions select the "Reports from West Africa" twitter subscription created in section 1.
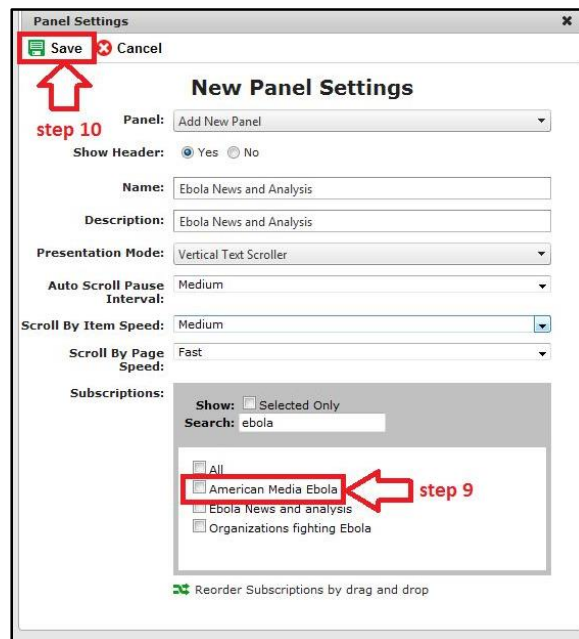
10.   Click the Save button.

Figure 11: New Panel Settings B

11.   Repeat steps 6 through 10. Create a panel for each subscription created in section 1. You should have 4 different panels tied to 4 different twitter subscriptions when finished.

12.   Click the "Return to Board Settings" button. Click the Save button on the "Edit Board" dialog.
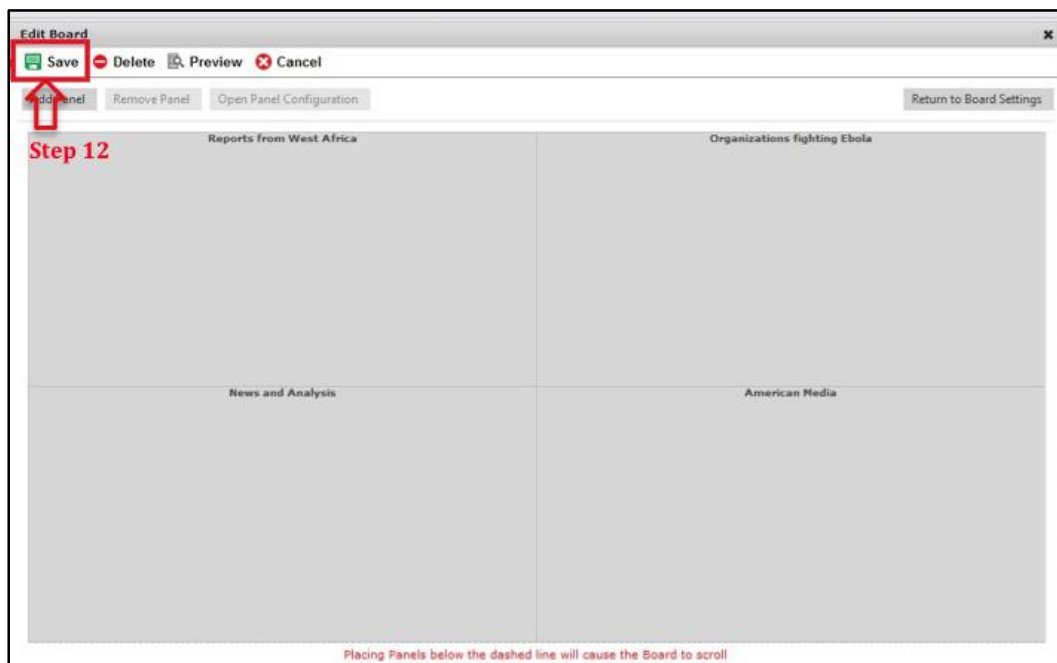

Figure 12: Save Board

13. Congratulations you now have a fully functional status board that tracks relevant social media accounts for important up to the minute information on the Ebola outbreak.

Figure 13: Finished Status Board

Conclusion

This document uses accounts found within a Vox.com article to create a Status Board specifically tailored to track information about the Ebola outbreak. The same steps can be used to create a status board to track any major incident or event, as well as other types of information. For example, if an emergency manager wanted to monitor local news stories all he/she would have to do is find appropriate Twitter accounts to add to a subscription and then use the above steps to create a Status Board panel that would display these feeds.

The Ebola Outbreak Tracker board only displays panels with Twitter subscriptions, however the Status Board allows users to mix different types of content. For example, a map panel could be added to this board to track where new cases of Ebola have been reported. DLAN's Status Board module gives users all the tools they need to create custom boards that can monitor the information that is most important to them.